

**REMARKS**

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

The Examiner should note that the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 11 has been amended to further clarify the structure of the ribs 41a. This additional description is not new matter, as it is clearly supported by the drawings (specifically FIGs. 1 and 3).

Claims 1, 2 and 5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Walther et al. (Walther). Claim 5 has been cancelled without prejudice and therefore the merits of this rejection with respect to claim 5 will not be discussed. Regarding claims 1 and 2, Applicant states that this rejection should be withdrawn in view of the following reasons.

Claim 1 has been amended to further recite that at least two of the plurality of ribs extend continuously to the worm housing segment beyond the base wall of the wheel housing segment. These two ribs are solidified faster than the base wall of the wheel housing segment and the worm housing segment during molding (see ribs 41a in FIG. 1, and the spec. at page 9, lines 9 – 14). Therefore, the solidified ribs, which extend between the wheel housing segment and the worm housing segment, can effectively restrain warping of the wheel housing segment during solidification thereof.

Walther, on the other hand, includes ribs 54 formed only within the base 53 of the gear chamber 25 that accommodates the worm wheel 6 and ribs 57 formed to support the bearing sleeve 40. The ribs 54, 57 do not continuously extend to the worm housing that receives the worm (helical unit) 5 and therefore are not able to restrain warping of the gear as are the ribs 41a of the present invention.

Therefore, as the drive mechanism in Walther does not anticipate the present invention as recited in amended claim 1, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner's rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) be withdrawn.

Claim 2 depends from claim 1 and further distinguishes the present invention as recited in amended claim 1 from the art of record. As claim 2 depends from amended claim 1, it should also be allowable for the same reasons given above. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner's rejection of claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) be withdrawn.

Claims 3 and 4 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being obvious in view of the combination of Walther and Evans. However, as both of these claims depend from amended claim 1, which is allowable for the above stated reasons, claims 3 and 4 should also be allowable for the same reasons. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner's rejection of claims 3 and 4 under 35 U.S.C. §103 be withdrawn.

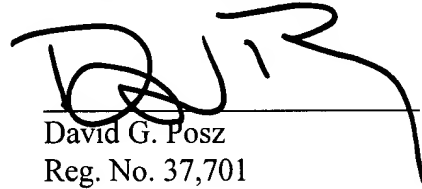
Claims 6 – 8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being obvious in view of the combination of Walther and Evans. However, as both of these claims depend from amended claim 1, which is allowable for the above stated reasons, claims 6 – 8 should also be allowable for the same reasons. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner's rejection of claims 6 – 8 under 35 U.S.C. §103 be withdrawn.

The Examiner should note that new claims 9 – 11 have been added. Claim 9 recites further details of the at least two ribs recited in amended claim 1 and is therefore allowable over the art of record for essentially the same reasons discussed above in connection with claim 1. Support for this claim can be found, for example, in the amended paragraph beginning at page 7, line 11 of the specification. Support for claims 10 and 11 can be found throughout the specification and drawings.

All rejections having been addressed, Applicant asserts that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and respectfully requests an early indication of same from the Examiner.

Please charge any fees that may be due to Deposit Account No. 50-1147.

Respectfully submitted,



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